

MIEASHA HICKS NAMED NATIONAL
YOUTH OF THE YEAR BY BOYS &
GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to announce to our colleagues that Mieasha Hicks, 18, a member of Boys & Girls Clubs of Toledo, Ohio, was named National Youth of the Year by Boys & Girls Clubs of America at its annual Congressional Breakfast held today in Washington, D.C. As noted by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America national office, sponsored by the Reader's Digest Foundation, the Youth of the Year program recognizes outstanding contributions to a member's family, school, community and Club, as well as personal challenges and obstacles overcome. She competed against four other regional finalists, Kewanna Daniels (Gulfport, Miss.), Ambrosia Hafen-Hayes (Las Vegas), Yamarie Negron (Mt. Kisco, N.Y.) and Luis Vasquez (Greeley, Colo.).

In their announcement of this award, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America describe Mieasha Hicks, as a survivor. Her parents were 13 and 15 years old when she was born. Periodically, she was shuffled between households as the family grew. Being the oldest of seven children, Mieasha had no choice but to mature quickly.

Today, she helps her brothers and sisters with their homework and prepares them for tests. She often takes them to the library, the movies, shopping and out to dinner. Thanks to Mieasha, all of her younger siblings have become honor students.

Her father died when she was 12 and her mother left the state when she was 11. Despite these traumatic occurrences, Mieasha's visits to the East Toledo Boys & Girls Clubs gave her a reason to stay positive.

For the last 10 years, the Club has given her a place to belong. There she served as vice president of the Keystone Club, a group which gave her the opportunity to lead community service projects. She has also learned marketing and sales skills while organizing bake sales and candy sales as fundraisers. Among other activities, Hicks assists with Power Hour, her Boys & Girls Club's after-school homework help program.

Mieasha Hicks was an academic standout at Central Catholic High School, where she has been a member of the National Honor Society and the school choir, a cheerleader, and student council representative. She is also actively involved with the African-American Culture Club.

She began attending Bowling Green University this fall where she will study medicine and science.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly a pleasure to commemorate this accomplishment by one of the first leaders of tomorrow's generation. For the next year she will have the opportunity to represent the Boys and Girls Clubs of America throughout the nation, and be an inspiration to thousands of young people who will see proof that success is possible when young people are willing to commit themselves to life's important goals. Congratulations, Miesha!

IN HONOR OF THE PIONEER
MOTHER MONUMENT

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, on April 23, 2003, in my hometown of Lexington, MO, a rededication was held on the Pioneer Mother Monument, known as the Madonna of the Trail.

In 1928, the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) erected 12 duplicate monuments known as the Madonna of the Trail paying tribute to the pioneer motherhood of the covered wagon days. The monuments were placed along the Old Trails Memorial Highway in twelve states across the United States. Statues are located in Springfield, Ohio; Wheeling, West Virginia; Council Grove, Kansas; Lexington, Missouri; Lamar, Colorado; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Springerville, Arizona; Vandalia, Illinois; Richmond, Indiana; Washington County, Pennsylvania; Upland, California; and Bethesda, Maryland.

At the original dedication of the Pioneer Mother Monument, 75 years ago, my father Ike Skelton III, spoke as a representative from the Lexington Legion Post. Also speaking that day was the Jackson County Court Judge Harry S. Truman.

The rededication of this monument was under the direction of the Missouri DAR. The moving force behind this event was LaVeda Cross, of Lexington, MO, with the help of her devoted husband Bill. However, without the support of the Lafayette/Lexington Chapter DAR and all the local citizens, the day would not have been possible.

I was privileged to deliver the rededication speech which is set forth as follows:

RE-DEDICATION OF THE PIONEER MOTHER
MONUMENT LEXINGTON, MO—AUGUST 23, 2003

Thank you for inviting me to take part in this special ceremony to rededicate the Madonna of the Trail, the Pioneer Mother Monument, here in Lexington. This event could not have taken place but for LaVeda Cross and her devoted husband, Bill. A special thanks to the Lafayette/Lexington Chapter DAR and local citizens for their efforts to make this day possible.

To be able to participate in this event is very special to me, and not just because my wife Susie has been an active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Seventy-five years ago, when this very monument was dedicated, many prominent people participated: Mrs. Benjamin L. Hart, the Missouri DAR's State Regent; Edward J. White, Vice President of the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company; Mrs. John Trigg Moss, Chairman of the DAR's National Old Trail Committee; Mrs. Henry C. Chiles, Regent of the Lafayette Lexington DAR Chapter; and Judge Harry S. Truman, President of the National Old Trails Road Association, to name a few.

But according to the program, and according to history passed down in my family, my father, Ike Skelton, III, Lafayette County's young Prosecuting Attorney, was allowed to give remarks while presenting a memorial flag and flag pole at the monument site. He was acting as the representative of the Lexington American Legion Post.

On that day, my father first made the acquaintance of Judge Harry Truman, the "Man From Independence", the man who

would later become President of the United States. Because of the lasting friendship that was formed at the inaugural dedication of this monument, my wife and I in later years came to know President Truman as well—and he was a genuinely nice person.

But imagining that Monday afternoon, September 17, 1928, it's unlikely anyone dreamed that among them stood a future President—a man whose decisions would set the course for the second half of the twentieth century and alter the future of the world. Makes you want to look around a bit at the crowd gathered here today, just in case.

The Pioneer Mother Monument in Lexington has been a landmark in this city for my entire life. As you may know, there are twelve duplicate DAR monuments known as the Madonna of the Trail paying tribute to the pioneer motherhood of the covered wagon days. The monuments have been placed along the Old Trails Memorial Highway in twelve states across the United States.

According to an article in the DAR Magazine written some years ago by Helen Bartlett of the Samuel Huntington Chapter in Huntington, Indiana, the idea of a monument to pioneer mothers came to Mrs. John Trigg Moss of St. Louis after she saw a picture of a statue in Portland, Oregon, dedicated to Sacajawea, the Shoshone Indian woman who guided Lewis and Clark from Fort Mandan, North Dakota, to the mouth of the Columbia River. That Sacajawea was the inspiration of this statue seems quite appropriate.

Lexington sits on the bluffs overlooking the river Lewis and Clark traveled, not quite half-way through their trek across the unknown continent. And like the pioneer mothers who followed, Sacajawea also knew what it was like to care for an infant while leading a party of travelers through the wilderness.

In this world of 24-hour news channels, satellite dishes, thousands of newspapers, magazines, and internet sites, it is difficult to overstate the leap of faith it must have taken for the pioneers who bravely ventured into largely uncharted territory as participants in the Westward Movement. In many respects, it was a jump into the great unknown. And in some cases, what the pioneers thought was true—from pamphlets, from books, from word of mouth—was far from it.

A verse that pays tribute to the covered wagon people goes like this:

The coward never started;
The weak died on the way;
Only the strong came through.

The women and men who pioneered the West built this country, but the role played by the women who built this country deserves special attention and recognition. This statue, symbolizing all of the women who settled the West, is larger than life—just as the women we celebrate led lives that were larger than life.

With a baby in her arms and another child at her side, the Madonna of the Trail glorifies the value of family. We can see her sturdy boots, visible as she strides Westward, but we also see that the Pioneer Mother carries a rifle. Looking at her, there is no reason to doubt that she would be able to use it.

The women who endured the trip West were tough, sturdy and strong. They traveled the mountains, the hills, and the plains, crossed rivers, fought heat and cold, wind and rain. They cared for their husbands, bore children, and protected their families. They tended their animals, hunted and prepared their food, repaired their wagons, camped under the stars, and staked out homesteads.

While men and women together built new communities in a new, strange land, it was

the women who ensured that the communities were actually settled. They built homes, schools, and churches, worked farms and ran businesses.

Some moved West by choice, others by circumstance. They faced terrible hardships. They made great sacrifices. They struggled mightily. Many of these pioneers—women, men, and children alike—did not survive. But those who did passed along to us a rich American heritage—a heritage based on the values of courage, independence, strength, determination, and freedom.

In addition to the pioneer women whose accomplishments are commemorated by this monument, the statue in Lexington also pays tribute to leaders in our local community who were instrumental in our country's development during the covered wagon days.

As noted on the statue's pedestal, Lexington was settled in 1820 by pioneers moving west from Virginia and Kentucky. The town became an early terminal for river transportation and also served as the starting point on the Western Trail of the pack pony and ox cart. Traders and wagon outfitters in Lexington were some of our most prominent citizens—John, James, and Robert Aull, William Russell, Alexander Majors, and William Waddell.

These successful businessmen made their names not only by selling essential supplies to men and women traveling West, but also by running their own wagons into the frontier to supply settlers and U.S. soldiers in their outposts. Russell, Majors, and Waddell's later enterprise, the Pony Express, was extraordinary in its ambition and still today enjoys legendary status.

Our pioneer ancestors seized opportunities that were available to those willing to take risks and settle our young country's Western territories. But unlike Harry Truman, who likely did not foresee in 1928 the prominent role he would play on the world stage, the early pioneers of our country realized that they were making history. From contemporary letters and diaries, we know that they understood that their adventurous spirits and determination to begin anew would shape our new country.

Their motives were diverse. Some may have come West because they could own land. Others traveled to make fast fortunes—some succeeded, and some simply held on to the dream of "getting rich quick". But whether immigrating from overseas, leaving crowded cities in the east, or moving from Midwestern cities that at one time bordered the frontier, their optimism was reflected in the belief that westward expansion was our nation's manifest destiny.

After seventy-five years, the DAR's Pioneer Mother Monument, the Madonna of the Trail, remains a fitting reminder of those days. Seventy-five years since the initial dedication of this statue, we again recognize and pay tribute to those who made possible the permanent Westward expansion of the United States, as well as the twentieth century leaders who commissioned this monument and worked to ensure that we would never lose sight of the vital contributions of pioneer women in our nation's history.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY BORDERS AND TRADE ACT OF 2003

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today a bill to improve transportation

efficiency and to facilitate trade along our country's major international borders and trade corridors—the National Highway Borders and Trade Act of 2003.

Congress created two programs in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century to assist the flow of people and goods through the United States-Canada and United States-Mexico borders and international trade corridors. Over the last 6 years, the funds provided through the borders and corridors programs have contributed to the critical improvement of the roads and bridges along these routes. However, despite this dedicated funding, our trade infrastructure is increasingly strained. Border crossing times are significantly delayed, interrupting the efficient flow of goods and disrupting the just-in-time delivery that is critical to our manufacturing and commercial sectors. Moreover, our highway system currently carries 70 percent of the total goods shipped in the United States, and freight traffic is expected to double in the next 20 years. This increased congestion will lead to lost productivity and have a negative impact on our economy. Changes to the borders and corridors programs are essential if we hope to address these increasingly growing concerns.

The National Highway Borders and Trade Act of 2003 will help reduce border crossing congestion and delays and will improve the highway corridors that carry international commerce by boosting funding for the borders and corridors programs to \$200 million for each program annually for the next 6 years.

Under the bill, the borders program is converted to a more predictable, formula-based program in order to stabilize funding levels for States' border projects. Under a common-sense formula that considers factors that are directly related to delays and the effect of trade on the economy, funding will be based on cargo weight, trade value, and the number of commercial and passenger vehicles passing over the border. Eligible uses for border program funds include improvements to infrastructure, construction of safety enforcement and inspection facilities, operational improvements such as ITS technology, and coordinated planning with Canadian and Mexican authorities.

The bill also makes improvements to the existing corridors program. The legislation focuses funding eligibility on roads that are one of the previously designated high priority corridors, as determined by Congress, and an intermodal road connector to an ocean or inland sea port that accepts a certain minimum amount of international commercial cargo. The corridors program is maintained as a discretionary program, and eligible uses include corridor planning and design activity, location and routing studies, multistate and intrastate coordination, environmental review, and construction costs.

Finally, the bill maintains fiscal responsibility and ensures State investment by mandating a 20-percent State or local share for projects carried out under either program.

This bill is similar to S. 1535, a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator LEVIN from my home State of Michigan. I look forward to working with Senator LEVIN toward passage of this important legislation.

TO PAY TRIBUTE TO TOMMY NUÑEZ FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION AND TO HIS COMMUNITY

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to a man who has served as not only a pioneer in his profession but as a shining role model to our community. I speak of none other than Mr. Tommy Nuñez, who recently retired as a referee from the National Basketball Association (NBA) after thirty years of service.

Considered one of the most respected and honored referees of the game, Tommy began his officiating career with the NBA in 1972 earning the distinction of being the first Latino to referee in any major sport. Throughout his thirty-year career, he has officiated 2,019 NBA games, 64 playoff games and the 1992 All-Star Game.

He began officiating basketball games in predominantly black and Hispanic leagues in his hometown of Phoenix, Arizona. Sharpening his skills he moved on to officiate high school and junior college games. His big break came when an NBA official happened to see him work an exhibition game with the Phoenix Suns and suggested he try out to become an NBA referee. He went on to become one of 16 out of 1000 applicants to join this elite group.

However, Tommy's accomplishments off the court far exceed what he has accomplished with the NBA. His dedication and service to his community have been widely recognized. He speaks and gives clinics for children throughout the country encouraging them to stay in school. His annual National Hispanic Basketball Classic for young Latinos raises money for youth activities. To add to this, he directs a summer work program designed to introduce young adults to the basic principals of employment and instill in them a sense of responsibility and pride.

Tommy's recognitions, to name a few, include being an honoree of the 1994 Hispanic Heritage Awards, inducted into the National Hispanic Sports Hall of Fame in 2001, and presented with the 1992 Roberto Clemente Award for excellence by the National Council of La Raza.

As you can clearly see he serves as an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Tommy Nuñez for his work and dedication to his community and to his sport; and best of wishes on his retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE PLIGHT OF THE ISRAELI PEOPLE DURING THE RECENT CEASE-FIRE PERIOD IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 2003

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to an article written by Rabbi Israel